

Contents

Foreword

Preface

PART ONE Introduction: Inventing History Writing in Greece and China

The Life of Herodotus (ca. 484–ca. 414 BCE)

MAP 1. The Persian Wars, 499–479 BCE

Herodotus's Historical Work: *The Histories*

Greek History Writing before Herodotus

The Form and Content of Herodotus's Historical Work

The Life of Sima Qian (ca. 145–ca. 86 BCE)

MAP 2. The Conquests of the Qin Dynasty, 221 BCE

Sima Qian's Historical Work: *The Records of the Historian*

Chinese History Writing before Sima Qian

The Form and Content of Sima Qian's Historical Work

FIGURE 1. Chronological Table from Sima Qian's *Records of the Historian*

Conclusion: Comparing Herodotus and Sima Qian

PART TWO The Documents

Herodotus, *The Histories*

1. How Asia and Europe Became Enemies: The Story of Croesus
2. How Others Live: The Customs of the Persians, Egyptians, Massagetai, and Scythians
3. Roping Asia to Europe: The Persian Invasion of Greece
4. Death before Dishonor: The Battle of Thermopylae and the Story of the Three Hundred
5. Human Wisdom and Divine Vengeance: Artemisia's Advice and Hermotimus's Revenge
6. Ending Stories: Cruelty and Revenge on Both Sides

Sima Qian, The Records of the Historian

7. Castration as the Price of Writing History: Sima Qian's Autobiographical Letter to Ren An
8. The First Emperor of China: The Basic Annals of the Qin Dynasty
9. Born from a Dragon: The Origins of Gaozu, Founder of the Han Dynasty
10. A Woman in Power: Empress Lü
11. Heroic Hermits: The Biographies of Bo Yi and Shu Qi
12. Arts of War: The Biographies of Sun Wu and Sun Bin
13. Imperial Assassin: The Biography of Jing Ke
14. How Others Live: The Customs of the Xiongnu

APPENDIXES

A Chronology of the Life of Herodotus and Events in His Histories (560–ca. 414 BCE).

[A Chronology of the Life of Sima Qian and Events in His
Records of the Historian \(551–ca. 86 BCE\)](#)

[Questions for Consideration](#)

[Selected Bibliography](#)

[Index](#)